

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 EPG-02 SP-02 STR-04

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3674

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY SUVA

USMISSION OECD PARIS

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DEPT PASS AID/AF

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SUBJECT: EC/ACP MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN FIJI - COMMENTS AND
RESULTS AND FOLLOW UP

REF: (A) SUVA 521 (NOTAL), (B) SUVA 475 (NOTAL),
(C) SUVA 474 (NOTAL), (D) EC BRUSSELS 3236 (NOTAL),
(D) EC BRUSSELS A-067, (E) EC BRUSSELS 4021

1. SUMMARY: EC OFFICIALS ARE CONCERNED THAT THE ANNUAL
EC/ACP MINISTERIAL MEETINGS ARE BECOMING CONFRONTATIONAL
SESSIONS WHICH COULD UNDERCUT THE COOPERATIVE SPIRIT OF THE
LOME CONVENTION; THE EC IS CONSIDERING MEASURES TO IMPROVE
EC/ACP COORDINATION. HOWEVER, DESPITE THE ACP'S INITIAL
HARDLINE, THE FIJI MEETING ENDED SUCCESSFULLY AND PARTICIPANTS
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SEEM TO WANT TO BUILD UPON THE CONVENTION'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS.
THE "SUVA ACTION PROGRAM" CALLING FOR INCREASED INTRA--ACP
COOPERATION INDICATES THAT THE CONVENTION HAS ALSO
PROMOTED SELF-HELP MEASURES AND COHESIVENESS AMONG THE
ACPS'. END SUMMARY.

2. EC COMMISSION, ACP SECRETARIAT AND EC PERMDEL OFFICIALS

WHO PARTICIPATED IN APRIL 13-14 ACP/EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING IN FIJI HAVE GIVEN US FURTHER ASSESSMENT OF THE MEETING IN ADDITION TO CHEYSSON'S VIEWS REPORTED IN REF F. THESE ASSESSMENTS CONFIRM REPORTS IN REF. A-C. MISSION CONSEQUENTLY SEES NO NEED TO SUPPLEMENT AMEMBASSY SUVA'S COMPREHENSIVE REPORTING. INSTEAD, THIS MESSAGE FOCUSES ON FOLLOW-UP AND BEHIND-THE-SCENES MANEUVERINGS. MISSION IS ALSO SENDING COPIES OF PRESS RELEASE AND STATEMENTS TO EUR/RPE - MCLEAN AND AID/AF - COOK.

3. WHILE THEY WERE PLEASED WITH SUCCESSFUL FINAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING, COMMISSION OFFICIALS EXPRESSED SERIOUS CONCERN OVER THE "UNCTAD-TYPE NEGOTIATING TACTICS" OF THE ACPS. THEY NOTE THAT LOME CONVENTION IS A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT IN WHICH ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE PARTNERS. ACPS CONSEQUENTLY SHOULD NOT USE ANNUAL MINISTERIAL AS AN INSTRUMENT TO EXTRACT MAXIMUM CONCESSIONS FROM THE EC. ON THE OTHER HAND, ACP OFFICIALS HERE SAY THAT NO PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE ON NUMEROUS ISSUES WHICH THEY HAD RAISED WITH EC OVER A YEAR AGO. MINISTERIAL MEETING CONSEQUENTLY PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY TO RESOLVE THESE ISSUES AT A POLITICAL LEVEL. ACP REPRESENTATIVES ARGUE THAT THE CONVENTION CALLS FOR EC/ACP CONSULTATIONS, BUT OFTEN THE EC MERELY INFORMS THE ACPS OF UNILATERAL DECISIONS AFFECTING THEIR INTERESTS.

4.COMMISSION OFFICIALS RECOGNIZE THAT THEY NEED TO IMPROVE COORDINATION AND DECISION MAKING PROCESS. THEY ARE CONSIDERING THE FOLLOWING: 1) HIRING EXPERTS TO WORK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON VARIOUS ACP SUBCOMMITTEES WHICH ADMINISTER THE CONVENTION; THE EC PLANS TO ALLOCATE ABOUT \$2 MILLION OF EDF FUND FOR THIS PURPOSE; 2) STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF THE ACP AMBASSADORS WHO CHAIR THE COMMITTEES BY INCLUDING THEM IN EC PREPARATIONS AND ASKING THEM TO REPRESENT ACP INTERESTS; 3) SPEEDING UP EC COUNCIL PREPARATIONS SO AS TO AVOID HANDLING THE ACP'S PROPOSALS AT THE LAST MINUTE; AND 4) PERSUADING THE ACP'S TO FOCUS THE MINISTERIAL AGENDA ON BROAD ISSUES, SUCH AS THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE AND THE FRAMEWORK OF THE NEXT CONVENTION.

5. ACP SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS SAY THE ACPS HAVE IMPROVED THEIR OWN INTERNAL COORDINATION AND COHESION BY ADOPTING AFTER THE MINISTERIAL "THE SUVA ACTION PROGRAM". THIS PROGRAM CALLS FOR INTRA-ACP TRADE AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION AS WELL AS POOLING ACP TRAINING AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES. THE PROGRAM ALSO PROVIDES FOR INCREASED CULTURAL EXCHANGES. THE ACPS PLAN TO HOLD A MEETING IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN EMPIRE IN SEPTEMBER TO CONSIDER MEASURES TO CARRY OUT

THIS PROGRAM. (COMMENT: THE LOME CONVENTION HAS ACTED AS A CATALYST IN ENCOURAGING THIS DIVERSE GROUP OF LDCS TO ATTEMPT TO HELP THEMSELVES. THE ACPS, HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING SUCH MEASURES FOR SOME TIME; IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THIS PROGRAM WILL SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVE INTRA-ACP COOPERATION. END COMMENT.)

6. ZAMBIA HAS ASSUMED THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE ACP MINISTERIAL COUNCIL. THE APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC OR TRADE MINISTER USUALLY CHAIRS THESE MEETINGS, BUT OFFICIALS HERE SAY THAT THE ACPS ARE ASKING PRESIDENT KAUNDA TO ASSUME THE CHAIRMANSHIP HIMSELF. ACP OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT KAUNDA'S PARTICIPTION WOULD INCREASE THEIR CLOUT WITH THE EC.

7. EC COMMISSION OFFICIALS NOTE THAT THE ACPS HAVE AGREED TO THE PROPOSED FIRST TRANCHE OF REGIONAL PROJECTS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(SEE REF. E.) DESPITE ACP OBJECTIONS, THEY CURRENTLY PLAN TO INSIST THAT THE ACPS COMPLETE PREPARATON OF THESE PROJECTS BY MARCH 1978 OR THE FUNDS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR OTHER PROJECTS. THESE OFFICIALS EXPECT, HOWEVER, THAT THIS DEADLINE WILL ULTIMATELY BE EXTENDED. THEY PLAN TO ANNOUNCE THE SECOND TRANCHE AMOUNTING TO ABOUT 130 MILLION UNITS OF ACCOUNT AT THE NEXT MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE, CURRENTLY SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 1978 IN EUROPE.

8. COMMENT: AS COMMISSIONER CHEYSSON POINTED OUT IN THE RECENT US/EC CONSULTATIONS (SEE REF. F), THE FIJI MEETING DID END SUCCESSFULLY. THIS INDICATES THAT DESPITE THEIR HARD-LINE TACTICS, THE ACPS PLACE CONSIDERABLE STOCK IN THE CONVENTION AND WANT TO COOPERATE WITH THE EC IN CARRYING IT OUT. THESE SKIRMISHES SHOULD NOT DETRACT FROM THE EC ACCOMPLISHMENT OF BRINGING 52 LDCS INTO A COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP BOTH SIDES CONTINUE TO WANT TO PRESERVE THIS ACCOMPLISHMENT AND BUILD UPON IT. END COMMENT. HINTON

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